

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

Fellow Citizens of the Senate and House of Representatives:

In obedience to the command of the constitution, it has now become my duty to give to Congress information of the state of the Union, and to recommend to their consideration such measures as I judge to be necessary and expedient.

But first, and above all, my thanks are due to Almighty God for the numerous benefits which He has bestowed upon this people, and our united prayers ought to ascend to Him that He would continue to bless our great republic in time to come most abundantly in time past.

Since the adjournment of the last Congress our constituents have enjoyed an unusual degree of health. The earth has yielded her fruits abundantly, and has bountifully repaid the toil of the husbandman. Our great staples have commanded high prices, and, up to within a brief period, our manufacturing, mineral, and mechanical occupations have largely partaken of the general prosperity.

We have possessed all the elements of material wealth, in such abundance, and yet, notwithstanding these advantages, our country in its monetary interests, is at the present moment in a deplorable condition. In the midst of unexampled plenty in all the productions of agriculture and in all the elements of national wealth, our manufactures suspended, our public works retarded, our private enterprises of different kinds abandoned, and thousands of useful laborers thrown out of employment, and reduced to want.

The revenue of the government, which is chiefly derived from duties on imports from abroad, has been greatly reduced, whilst the appropriations made by Congress at its last session for the current fiscal year are very large in amount.

Under these circumstances a loan may be required before the close of our present session, but this, though a necessary expedient, would prove to be only a slight misfortune when compared with the suffering and distress prevailing among the people. With this the government is confronted, and the path, though it may be without the power of its own relief.

It is my duty to inquire what has produced such unfortunate results, and whether their recurrence can be prevented. In all former revisions the blame might have been fairly attributed to a variety of co-operating causes; but not upon the present occasion. It is apparent that our existing paper currency has proceeded solely from our extravagant and vicious system of paper currency and bank credits, exciting the people to wild speculations and gambling in stocks, and the result has continued to recur at successive intervals so long as the amount of the paper currency and bank loans and discounts of the country shall be left to the discretion of the banks, irresponsible banking institutions which from the very law of their nature will consult the interest of their stockholders rather than the public welfare.

The framers of the constitution, when they gave to Congress the power "to coin money and to regulate the value thereof," and prohibited the States from coining money, emitting bills of credit, or making anything but gold and silver coin a tender in payment of debts, supposed they had protected the people against the evils of an excessive and irredeemable paper currency, and that the remedy for the existing anomaly that a government endowed with the sovereign attribute of coining money and regulating the value thereof should have recourse to the expedient of driving this coin out of the country and filling up the channels of circulation with paper which does not represent gold and silver.

It is one of the duties of the government to protect the people from the evils of an excessive and irredeemable paper currency, and to regulate the value thereof. It is one of the duties of the government to protect the people from the evils of an excessive and irredeemable paper currency, and to regulate the value thereof.

peels, either in proportion to their capital for to invest in Central America, it is contended by the British government that the true construction of this language has left them in the rightful possession of all that portion of Central America which was their occupancy on the date of the treaty; in fact, that the treaty is a virtual recognition on the part of the United States of the right of Great Britain, either as owner or occupant, of the whole of Central America, sweeping round from the Rio Honda to the port and harbor of San Juan del Nicaragua, together with the adjacent Bay Islands, except the comparison of small portions of the western Slope toon and Cape Honduras. According to their construction the treaty does no more than simply prohibit them from extending their possession in Central America beyond the present limits. It is not too much to assert that if in the United States the treaty had been considered susceptible of such a construction it never would have been negotiated under the authority of the President, nor would it have received the approbation of the Senate.

The universal conviction in the United States was, that when our government consented to violate its territorial integrity, it was to stipulate with a foreign government never to occupy or acquire territory in the Central American portion of our own continent, and that the British government, in its turn, should have stipulated to abstain from occupying or acquiring territory in the Central American portion of our own continent, and that the British government, in its turn, should have stipulated to abstain from occupying or acquiring territory in the Central American portion of our own continent.

Under the late administration negotiations were instituted between the two governments for the purpose, if possible, of removing these difficulties; and a treaty having this laudable object in view, was negotiated, and on the 17th October, 1856, and was submitted to the Senate on the following 10th of December. Whether this treaty, either in its original or amended form, would have accomplished the object intended, is a question which I do not feel called upon to discuss. It is, however, to be regretted that it was not submitted to the Senate, as amended, was ratified by me on the 12th March, 1857, and was transmitted to London for ratification by the British government.

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Upon an examination of this convention between Great Britain and Honduras of the 27th August, 1856, it was found that, whilst declaring that Honduras constituted a separate and independent State, and that Great Britain, under the sovereignty of the republic of Honduras, it deprived that republic of the rights without which its sovereignty over them could not be maintained, and that Great Britain, under the sovereignty of the republic of Honduras, it deprived that republic of the rights without which its sovereignty over them could not be maintained.

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be encouraged, evinced a spirit of good will and kindness towards our country which I heartily reciprocate. It is, notwithstanding, much to be regretted that the people of Central America are so much divided, and that the true construction of this language has left them in the rightful possession of all that portion of Central America which was their occupancy on the date of the treaty; in fact, that the treaty is a virtual recognition on the part of the United States of the right of Great Britain, either as owner or occupant, of the whole of Central America, sweeping round from the Rio Honda to the port and harbor of San Juan del Nicaragua, together with the adjacent Bay Islands, except the comparison of small portions of the western Slope toon and Cape Honduras.

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It is one of the first and highest duties of any independent State, in its relations with the members of the great family of nations, to maintain its people from acts of hostile aggression against their citizens or subjects. The most eminent writers on public law do not hesitate to denounce such hostile acts as robbery and murder. The people of Central America, my fellow citizens, like those of Central America, may not feel themselves able to assert and vindicate their rights. The case would be far different if expeditions were sent to make private war against a powerful nation. If such expeditions were fitted out from abroad against any portion of our own country, to burn down cities, murder and plunder our people, and usurp our government, we should call any power on earth to the strictest account for not preventing such enormities.

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my intention to interfere with the decision of the people of Kansas, either for or against slavery. From this I have always carefully abstained. I trust that the duty of taking care that the laws be faithfully executed, may only desire that the people of Kansas should furnish to Congress the organic law, whether for or against slavery, in this manner smooth their passage into the Union. In emerging from the condition of territorial dependence into that of a sovereign State, it was their duty to be guided by the will of the people of the Territory, on the direct question whether this important domestic institution should or should not continue to exist. Indeed, it was the only possible mode in which their will could be authentically ascertained.

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possibly in civil war, before she can again make up her mind to the question of re-annexation, and again reach the point she has already attained. Kansas has for some years occupied too much of the public attention. It is high time that it should be directed to far more important objects. When once admitted into the Union, whether with or without slavery, the settlement of its limits will speedily pass away, and she will then for the first time be left, as she ought to have been long since, to manage her own affairs in her own way. If her constitution should be framed by or any other subject, by displacing a majority State, she will be in a position to prevent them from changing it, and, under these circumstances, it may well be questioned whether the peace and quiet of the whole country are not of greater importance than the mere temporary triumph of either of the political parties in Kansas.

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Should the constitution without slavery be adopted by the votes of the majority, the rights of property in slaves now in the Territory are reserved. The number of these is very small, but if it were greater the provision would be equally just and reasonable. These slaves were brought into the Territory under the constitution of the United States, and are now the property of their masters. This point has at length been finally decided by the highest judicial tribunal of the country—and this upon the plain principle that the rights of property in slaves now in the Territory are reserved. The number of these is very small, but if it were greater the provision would be equally just and reasonable. These slaves were brought into the Territory under the constitution of the United States, and are now the property of their masters.

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